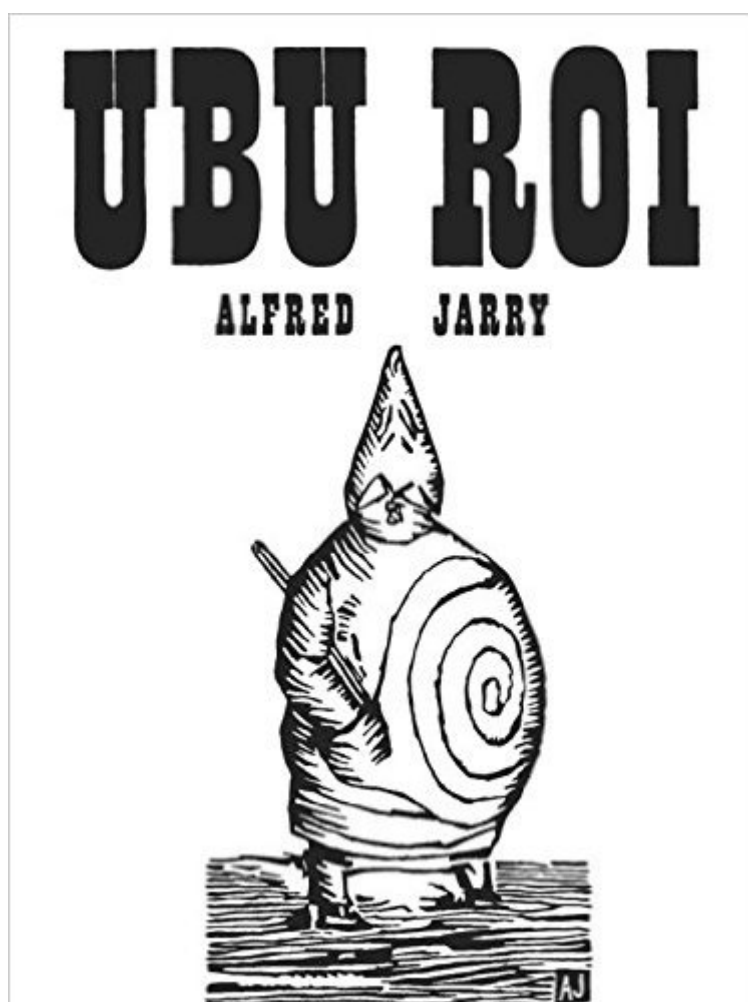


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Ubu Roi (New Directions Paperbook)



Synopsis

A stunning, controversial work that immediately outraged audiences with its scatological references during the 1896 premiere, *Ubu Roi* satirizes the tendency of the successful bourgeois to abuse his authority and become irresponsibly complacent. Championed by Dadaists and Surrealists as the first absurdist drama, the play features a main character that is cruel, gluttonous, and grotesque—the author's metaphor for modern man. This drama in five acts by Alfred Jarry is translated from the French by Barbara Wright, with two portraits of the author by L. Lantier and F. A. Cazals, and several drawings by Jarry and Pierre Bonnard, and 24 drawings by Franciszka Themerson, doodled on lithographic plates—all followed by "The Song of the Dismembering," and concluding with two essays on the theatre by the same author and the same translator. More than 200 black-and-white line drawings

Book Information

Series: New Directions Paperbook

Paperback: 186 pages

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Average Customer Review: 4.2 out of 5 stars — See all reviews (4 customer reviews)

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Customer Reviews

"Ubu Roi" is surely Jarry's most widely known work, and it is an excellent and fun read indeed. However, this edition on New Directions is, unfortunately, badly done. The translation here is by Barbara Wright, whose translations (of Jarry, Queneau, and others) I generally enjoy. I'm sure this one is equally good, but it is difficult to tell. The entire text of "Ubu Roi" is presented here in hand-written form (scribbled is more like it), with a pen the size of a sharpie. Add to that inane drawings (not Jarry's) around and behind the text on every page. Not only is this very distracting, but some words are not really legible. If you try hard enough you can read it, but it is a very tedious process and completely takes away the fun of reading "Ubu Roi". With that said, there are a few

additional texts in this volume that are printed normally, and which are worthwhile. First is Barbara Wright's useful introduction, and at the end are two essays on the theatre by Jarry, as well as his "Song of Disembraining". The two essays can be found in the Methuen edition, but the "Song..." I have not seen in any other easily available Jarry volume. I'd highly recommend that any interested reader avoid this edition and pay a few more dollars for the Methuen edition. The translation there (by Connolly and Taylor) is excellent, includes the two subsequent Ubu plays, and features a lengthy introduction and larger selection of Jarry's essays on the theatre.

Hugely, magnificently funny. I saw a live production of this play on an education channel some years ago. It is totally anarchic and joyful.

1991 22nd printing includes; Ubu Roi (drama in 5 acts); The Song of Disembraining; 2 essays on theatre by Alfred Jarry-"Questions of the Theatre" and "Of the Futility of the "Theatrical" In the Theatre"; 2 portraits of the author by L. Lantier and F.A. Cazals, several drawings by Jarry and Pierre Bonnard and 204 drawings by Franciszka Themerson doodled on lithographic plates. Fascinating little book!

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